

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

**REGION 4**

**61 Forsyth Street**

**Atlanta Georgia 30303-3104**

MEMORANDUM:

**DATE:** 11/3/2017  
**SUBJECT:** Water Protection Division's Weekly Report  
**FROM:** Mary S. Walker, Director  
**TO:** Water Protection Division  
**TO:**

Attached for your use is Water Protection Division's Weekly Accomplishments Report. This report provides a summary of the day-to-day activities and accomplishments across the various programs within the Water Protection Division. I appreciate your continued efforts in support of our mission to protect human health and the environment and to highlight your key accomplishments on a weekly basis.

***Sustainable Communities and Watersheds Branch***

**2016 EPA/IECA STORMWATER AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE CONFERENCE**

WCWS staff participated on a IECA planning committee call to discuss the 2018 MS4 conference. The group talked about the main topics, which keynote speakers have been locked down, timing logistics, etc. The group asked if EPA would be presenting the Raincatcher Awards at the meeting again.

**NEXT STEP(S): N/A**

M. Kuo, 2-9847.

**CROSS-PROGRAM MICCOSUKEE TRIBE FL**

ECWS staff reviewed the draft Miccosukee NPS Management Plan and will participate in a meeting, with the Nonpoint Source Tribal Coordinator and a Miccosukee Tribal representative, to discuss the content and proposed recommendations.

**NEXT STEP(S): N/A**

Y. Brown, 2-9451.

**TRASH FREE WATERS**

On October 30, 2017, WCWS staff conducted a call with Charles Grisafi, Florida and Caribbean Regional Coordinator, NOAA Marine Debris Program (MDP). He has been working at the USCG Incident Command Post on vessel recovery and removal operations in

Florida post Hurricane Irma. He requested that I schedule a conference call so he can learn about EPA TFW efforts in Florida. The NOAA MDP is currently working closely with partners at FDEP and USF College of Marine Science to involve municipal public works and stormwater departments to implement consumer debris objectives in the FL reduction plan. NOAA also will lead an effort in 2018 to re-brand and update content the FL reduction plan. Charles is hoping for EPA's involvement and input in that process. SCWS staff sent a survey to all potential participants on October 31, 2017, to determine the best time to schedule the call. Recipients of the survey include EPA HQ, Adam Saslow (EPA's TFW consultant), the Region 4 Florida 319 coordinator, coordinators of Region 4 Florida NEPs, and NEP staff.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Schedule the call based on responses to the scheduling survey. C. Plymale, 2-9794.

**CROSS-PROGRAM NORTH BIRMINGHAM AL**

WCWS staff received an update on the second half of SCWB's Regional Sustainable Environmental Science (RESES) project with the Office of Research and Development (ORD). ORD's EnviroAtlas team has entered the one-meter resolution land cover for Birmingham and is in the process of finalizing the metric calculations, so the RESES project should be finalized before the end of the calendar year. EnviroAtlas is a web-based interactive tool that integrates over 300 separate data layers to help decision makers understand the implications of planning and policy decisions on ecosystems and their services. EnviroAtlas is designed for government, professionals, researchers, educators, non-governmental organizations, and anyone interested in considering the benefits or impacts of a decision, such as siting a new road or city park. Once the project is complete, WCWS will distribute the information to Birmingham stakeholders.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC), in partnership with the City of Birmingham, Cawaco RC&D Council Inc., Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve, and the Village Creek Human and Environmental Justice Society, received a 2017 Five Star Urban Waters grant to restore 1.7 acres and perform invasive plant removal along 1,000 of Village Creek. The 2018 Five Star Urban Waters Request for Proposals should be announced within the next month and information will be forwarded to stakeholders.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

WCWS staff will forward grant and project information to Birmingham stakeholders when it becomes available. Review of the Village Creek Watershed Management Plan is ongoing. M. Lindsley, 2-9296.

**NONPOINT SOURCE PROGRAM - NWQI - ECWS**

WCWS staff prepared speaking points on EPA Region 4's Nonpoint Source and National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) Partnership for an upcoming National Black Farmers Association Conference to be held in Hattiesburg, Mississippi on Nov. 3-4, 2017.

**NEXT STEP(S): N/A**

D. Robertson, 2-9398.

**NONPOINT SOURCE PROGRAM - TRAINING - WCWS**

WCWS staff member joined other NPS staff members in participating in the Assessment, Listing, and TMDL Sections (ALTS) Regional Conference with Region 4 States on October 27th. The ALTS took the opportunity to dedicate a portion of the Conference to providing cross-training to state participants of how other Water programs overlap with the Assessment, Listing, and TMDLs programs in different states. As reported by this staff member, Mississippi employs a combination of its Basin Management Program, watershed prioritization, statewide nutrient reduction strategies and Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan support, public and private partnerships all to target priority listed waters with completed TMDLs to achieve restoration.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Staff captured some questions posed by various state participants. Plans are to follow-up and possibly improve coordination with both programs at the state and federal levels. (2 weeks) D. Williams, 2-9297.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

1. Received information about the Green Infrastructure contractor training by Southface (NPS grant). Trainings will be held around the state and will cost \$60.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

1. Will forward information about the contractor training to SCWB and ask for them to distribute to their GI, NPS and NPDES stormwater contacts. C. Mckay, 2-9412.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

Communicating with Lisa Hair and Laura Bachle on projects that use GI for flood Mitigation.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Phone Meeting Nov 02nd, and again Nov08th. B. Hummel, 2-9284.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS - GA**

1. Participated in a two-hour Middle Chattahoochee Watershed discussion (along with Bryan Hummel) on organizing and planning efforts to take existing data in the watershed and provide an economic case study/report on how land uses impact water quality (particularly to highlight the fact that forested lands provide high quality water - landscape scale green infrastructure). Due to lack of funding, it appears that they will look at finding students (UGA and AL Colleges) to do some of the GIS - land use and water quality data layer analysis. They would like to use an analytical approach similar to a study completed in the Lower Savannah by The Nature Conservancy. The Nature Conservancy study was a key instrument in the development of the Savannah Clean Water Fund utility funded program. It is hoped that within 2-3 years the work done on the Middle Chattahoochee will lead to

positioning the area to be a good candidate for Healthy Watershed grant funding. Kitty Wiseman is serving as watershed coordinator for this effort.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

1 Will continue to work with the group as they pursue the work. Will discuss the project with Johnny Purify. C. McKay, 2-9412.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS - SC**

Making connections with regenerative farmers and ranchers in SC.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Plan to invite the 319 SCDHEC program, the SC NRCS contacts, and select people from R4 WPD to a future farm tour so we can all learn about agricultural practices that can meet several water quality objectives at triple-bottom-line profit. B. Hummel, 2-9284.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - COMMUNITY REQUEST FOR HELP - TN**

WCWS staff followed up on a citizen call regarding no exposure certificates for their facility. Staff briefly discussed with HQ staff and was able to provide an answer to the caller.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

M. Kuo, 2-9847.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM**

ECWS staff shared with EPA R4 staff and HQs, the just recently published article in the international scientific journal Marine Policy authored by the seven Gulf of Mexico NEPs. Four NEPs in Region 4 include Directors of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, Indian River Lagoon NEP, Sarasota Bay Estuary Program and the Charlotte Harbor NEP. The article highlights how the NEPs leveraged local and national partnerships to provide scientific expertise, unbiased information, volunteer coordination, and implementation of recovery projects and programs during and following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in these NEP communities and throughout the Gulf. Clearly another great example of the strength of local implementation of the national NEP in response to natural or man-made events in our coastal communities. The EPA along with the NEPs are exploring potential roles and responsibilities to help when these unexpected natural disasters occur.

Felicia and Tiana will be attending the ANEP Technical Conference in Boston MA with the 28 NEPs to share in lessons learned and technical advances in restoration, outreach strategies and much more. Felicia and Tiana will also lead and participate in the EPA R4/NEP Regional meeting prior to the start of the ANEP Tech Conference. Felicia solicited agenda topics from all participants including EPA HQs. Agenda items include: discussion on NEP success in 2017, barriers to future success, guidance, NEPORT and HQs & R4 listening sessions to identify NEP needs, support and efficiencies in order to achieve greater future success. The meetings will be held in EPA Region 1 offices; November 2-5th.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Contact: FBurks for additional information. F. Burks, 2-9371.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - NONPOINT SOURCE GRANT - GA**

1. Attended the Coosa-North GA Regional Water Planning Council and the North GA Water Resources Partnership meeting in Jasper, GA on Wednesday, Nov. 1. GA EPD Jennifer Welte, Gigi Steel and Christine Voudy in attendance. Met NW GA Regional Planning Commission's Julianne Meadows, Kevin McAuliff and Ethan Calhoun and discussed briefly the NWQI and NPS potential application. Also discussed implementing Green Infrastructure in rural areas. Meeting provided presentations by Duncan Huges, Soque River Watershed Association (some discussion on nutrient trading (point - nonpoint)); presentation materials on recently adopted Regional Water Plan, presentation on redundancy and emergency interconnectivity study update, discussion on new plan's recommendation for water management best management practices including water quality. Two staffers from USGS attended as well. 2. Attended the agricultural field day at Clark Hill Farm (with Brian Hummel) organized for EPA by the GA Soil and Water Conservation Commission. Met a field representative of Congressman Doug Collins who requested information about the NPS program. Mark Nuhfer worked with Public Affairs providing NPS documents (EPA and GA). An email was sent by Public Affairs on November 1. 3. Discussed concerns with GA EPD and Mark Nuhfer about outreach costs associated with the final scope of work for a new GA NPS implementation grant to Camden County - St. Mary's Horsepen Creek septic system repairs.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

1. Continued work with NWGRPC on NWQI and GI implementation. Continued work with GA NPS management on setting up advisory groups to help develop strategies for reduction of NPS pollution, in this instance particularly nutrients, to be included in the next NPS Management Plan update. 2.) Will provide the GA Soil and Water Conservation Commission with information about the NWQI effort in Etowah Watershed. Will also inform RC&D's. 3. Will continue discussions with GA EPD until resolved. C. McKay, 2-9412.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - NONPOINT SOURCE GRANT - NC**

ECWS staff pulled together the final reports, coordinated with North Carolina Nonpoint Source staff and certified North Carolina's 2012 Section 319 Grant for close out.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Veronica remains available to assist our Grants Program, should additional information be required for close out. V. Fasselt, 2-9471.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - NONPOINT SOURCE GRANT - R4**

Staff is reviewing 319 NPS proposals and Watershed Based Plan for FY 2017 projects. EPA awarded the TN Department of Agriculture \$2,562,000 to support management of nonpoint sources of water pollution throughout TN. A portion of the funds are used to support TDEC's monitoring.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Provide comments and approval for the 2017 NPS projects. V. Doyle, 2-9942.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - NONPOINT SOURCE  
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM - KY**

1. Completed review and comments on the Draft Ohio River Bacteria TMDL for WCWB NPS Program.
2. Provided comments on the KY PPA, Watershed Protection measures and uploaded the FY18 319 workplan to the KY PPG SharePoint site. The comment on the Watershed Protection measure pertains to SP-12 which is currently under national review for elimination or revision. SP-12 will stay in the workplan until further notice is provided on the status.
3. Participated as a member of the Water Lean Team on the national "Community of Practice Team" call. The call is hosted by the EPA, Office of Strategic Environmental Management, and other EPA Regions are engaged. The new Chief of Operations, Henry Darwin, was the guest and provided his initial thoughts on where and how Lean fits into his vision for EPA operations over the next several years.
4. The National Nonpoint Source Conference committee is requesting presentation topics. The following topics were offered as suggestions 1). Effects of superstorms on 319 projects: environmental and economic impacts, how to regain the momentum. 2) Shared Goals: NPS and Source Water Protection.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

A. Conley, 2-9768.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - NONPOINT SOURCE  
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM - R4**

ECWS staff forwarded the October 2017 Region 4 Unliquidated Balance Summary Reports of Section 319 Grant Funding for FYs 2007 - 2015 and Active Grants are attached; the reports are in one Excel file (Tab 1: FYs 2007 - 2015 Data; Tab 2: Active Grant Data through 2015) to the Nonpoint Source Program Management, Project Officers and the Water Protection Division Grants Specialists. The October FY 2007 - 2015 Region 4 ULO average is 11.14% compared to 11.81% in September 2017, with all eight states below the 20% regional ULO target. The reports were generated by Kamilah Carter. If you have any questions regarding information in these reports, please feel free to contact her at [carter.kamilah@epa.gov](mailto:carter.kamilah@epa.gov) or 2-9280.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

The next Region 4 Nonpoint Source Program Unliquidated Balance Report will be generated in November 2017. Y. Brown, 2-9451.

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - NPS CZARA PROGRAM – AL**

ECWS staff began review of Alabama's Coastal Non Point Coastal Program Necessary Action Plan. The submittal of this document follows Alabama's recent NOAA 312 Review. Alabama's submission date for this planning tool is November 30th, 2017.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Y. Brown, 2-9451.

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - NPS CZARA PROGRAM – GA**

ECWS staff forwarded the comments from Region 4 attorney and the Sustainable /communities and Watersheds Branch Chief to EPA Headquarters and NOAA CZARA Program representatives.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Y. Brown, 2-9451.

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - STORMWATER PERMIT REVIEW & ASSISTANCE - GA**

1. Observed the Stormwater MS4 inspection in Riverdale, GA on Wed/Thurs October 25 and 26. Learned about a loop hole in the permit - communities where they do not have Local Issuing Authority for construction - may not have anyone looking at their construction projects. 2. Attended the Construction general permit stakeholder public meeting on Wednesday, Oct 25th at Tradeport

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

1. Will be discussing with GA EPD. 2. Will be meeting to discuss permit with GA EPD Stormwater. C. McKay, 2-9412.

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - STORMWATER PERMIT REVIEW & ASSISTANCE - KY**

WCWS staff has received a working draft of KY's response to comments on the Phase II general permit. KY is working towards finalizing the permit and responding to comments.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

M. Kuo, 2-9847.

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & WATERSHEDS - TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

ECWS staff advised the Section Chief of WSRS regarding the files for our Wetlands Advance Identification Projects.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Once the files are returned from archive, Veronica will provide assistance in locating the final reports and separating them out for future reference. V. Fasselt, 2-9471.

## **WATERSHED COORDINATION - 106 WORKPLAN AND OVERSIGHT - WCWS**

WCWS staff reviewed KY's draft PPG grant and provided comments to the grants section.

### **NEXT STEP(S): N/A**

M. Kuo, 2-9847.

## **WATERSHED COORDINATION - 106 WORKPLAN AND OVERSIGHT - WCWS**

TDEC submitted an FY 2017, SP12 for Big Piney Creek as required by the Section 106 Workplan. The state commits to identifying and completing one 12-digit hydrologic unit code (HUC) watershed in which one or more of the impairment causes identified in 2002 are removed for at least 40 percent of the impaired water bodies or impaired miles/acres, or there is significant watershed-wide improvement, as demonstrated by valid scientific information, associated with the impairments.

The SP12 for Big Piney Creek addressed siltation and pH, but the SP12 was on the 2018 303(d) list. This list has yet to be approved by EPA. However, staff worked with TDEC to get Big Piney Creek uploaded into the ATTAINS database. Therefore, EPA has accepted the Big Piney Creek. Since the deadline for approved 2017 SP12s were due last week, Big Piney Creek will be counted as an SP12 for 2018.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Staff will review the SP12 for additional comments or concerns. V. Doyle, 2-9942.

## ***Water Quality Planning Branch***

## **ALABAMA 2020 TRIENNIAL REVIEW**

On October 30, 2017, WQSS (Mayo) received comments on EPA's draft water quality standards triennial review (2018-2020) kick-off letter sent to Alabama Department of Environmental Management Staff (C. Johnson and J. Haslbauer). EPA is planning on having a call today (10/31) to discuss the state's comments.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

EPA intends to issue the triennial review kick-off letter to Alabama by the end of the week. L. Mayo, 2-9247.

## **MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT - 106 WORKPLAN AND OVERSIGHT - ALTS**

Staff (Stebbins) entered comment on KY's FY18 PPA workplan that related to updating R4 about development schedule earlier in the year. Internal comments were due by 10/31/17.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Answer any follow-up questions about comment. M. Stebbins, 2-9393.



#### **MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT - 106 WORKPLAN AND OVERSIGHT - DIAS**

On September 29, 2017, North Carolina submitted a revision to their Clean Water Act Section 106 Monitoring Program Strategy. Pursuant to their workplan, the state is required to update the strategy annually by September 30th. The main revision to the plan was the removal of surface water monitoring around solid waste management facilities. EPA has requested additional information regarding the rationale for this change.

##### **NEXT STEP(S):**

A response is pending from North Carolina. C. McArthur, 2-9391.

#### **MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT - COMMUNICATION - DIAS**

I have been working as the Co-Lead for the CFC within the Water Protection Division. The tailgate kickoff event is this Thursday. Division team met to discuss plans and setup for the event.

##### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Complete prep work for the tailgate event on Thursday. W. Parker, 2-9778

#### **MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT - GEOSPATIAL DATA ANALYSIS - DIAS**

DIAS is continuing to work on creating a web application to display the narrative and analysis for the regional trend analysis dataset and high level trend screening tool for use in Water Protection Division programs.

Set up of a dashboard story map for the visualization and dissemination of the trend data will be an important step in making sure the product is useful as a screening tool to be utilized by all WPD programs.

##### **NEXT STEP(S):**

A progress and technical meeting has been scheduled for this week to determine next steps forward. W. Parker, 2-9778

#### **MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT - GEOSPATIAL DATA ANALYSIS - DIAS**

Prepared report of geospatial options for future emergency response and acquired quote for regional GIS training. Developed flyer for upcoming workshop by Region 4 on do-it-yourself continuous monitoring sensors. Continued review of EPA GIS tools for detection of cyanobacteria blooms.

##### **NEXT STEP(S): N/A**

J. Becker, 2-9227.

## **MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT- NATIONAL AQUATIC RESOURCE SURVEYS - DIAS**

Attended the annual Southeast Water Pollution Biologist Association (SWPBA) Meeting in Grand Rivers Kentucky from October 23-26. Founded in 1973, SWPBA is a non-profit organization consisting of State Regulatory and Tribal Water Pollution Biologists whose programs are funded through the EPA Region 4 Clean Water Act Section 106 Monitoring Grants. Presented a summary of the 2017 National Lakes Assessment activities, a summary of the 2012 National Lakes Assessment results, and proposed changes to implementation of the National Aquatic Resource Surveys.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Will attend the national National Aquatic Resource Surveys meeting in Silver Springs, Maryland in December 2017. C. McArthur, 2-9391.

## **MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT- REGIONAL MONITORING COORDINATION- DIAS**

EPA administers CWA sec. 106 supplemental monitoring initiative grants to address the need for credible reports on water quality status and trends nationwide and States have been developing probabilistic monitoring programs in the last decade to make statistically-valid inferences about waters state-wide without ability to monitor all state waters. However, there is no compendium on the condition of all state waters derived from data collected through these probabilistic programs. Therefore, R4 staff are beginning to first compile information about state programs to get a regional overview of the status of these monitoring programs and eventually explore ways to evaluate the condition of waters at the state scale.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Staff presented preliminary findings at the Southeaster Water Pollution Biologist Associations annual meeting in KY and requested additional information from State partners regarding their programs. Staff will continue to compile information regarding State probabilistic monitoring programs to compare their status in R4 with national goals set by the 2008 Monitoring Initiative grant funding guidance. S. Platukyte, 2-9304.

## **MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT- REGIONAL MONITORING COORDINATION- DIAS**

TDEC requested EPAs assistance with collecting data at 8 locations along the Duck River from below Normandy Dam to below the Columbia Dam AND SESD was finally able to complete this sampling on 9/26 and 9/27. BUT, in addition to collecting data that TDEC will use to parameterize and calibrate a water quality model, SESD also used the sampling to beta-test a new sampling system for nitrate-nitrite they are calling FLAME. THEREFORE, once the nitrate-nitrite data comes back from the lab, it will be compared to see how the FLAME system performed.

### **NEXT STEP(S): N/A**

E. Belk, 2-9377.

## **MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT- TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE- DIAS**

As a member of the EPA Chief Scientist Certifying Board, completed review of Cheryl Zulick's (EPA HQ) application and provided comments and concerns to the Certifying Board.

**NEXT STEP(S): N/A**

C. McArthur, 2-9391.

**SEMINOLE CYCLE 3 GROUP 5 REVIEW**

Provided write up and map of waterbodies on draft verified list that are near Seminole lands.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

await additional communications.

J. Pohnan, 2-9731.

**TMDL DEVELOPING SUPPORT - FLOYDS FORK - DIAS**

During the modelers meeting last week, DIAS staff identified the point source assumptions that currently generate the optimal WASP model fit. This will allow for the initial calibration of the TMDL model. By comparing time series data and output from these multiple competing model versions, John Davis (DIAS) was able to identify the data reconstruction assumptions that best addressed the high TN loadings. After which, John Davis (DIAS) generated additional RCode to compare WASP output to the TMDL compliance points that KDOW provided. Although additional calibration is still required, it has provided a starting point for parameterizing additional constants in the model, beginning the initial model calibration.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Continue to parameterize and calibrate the model J. Davis, 2-9315.

**TMDL PROGRAM - MEETING - ALTS**

Staff (all ALTS staff and many other WPD staff) held a R4 Section 303(d) all-states meeting October 25-27, 2017. Topics covered included the 2018 IR kickoff letter, assessing for natural conditions, hydrologic alteration, harmful algal blooms, TMDL decision document language, ATTAINS submittal, updates on WQ-27 and WQ-28, 5-alt plans, an NPDES panel discussion, and more. There were many opportunities for states to share information and discuss successes and challenges, as well as time for states to meet one-on-one with their respective coordinator. The opportunity to meet face-to-face was extremely beneficial, and participants and staff felt it was a productive and well-spent three days.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Follow up on action items from the meeting. M. Stebbins, 2-9393.

**TMDL PROGRAM - OHIO RIVER BACTERIA - ALTS**

Staff (Stebbins) sent out meeting invite to discuss the latest Ohio River TMDL draft.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Compile comments from meeting and send feedback to R5 by November 17, 2017. M. Stebbins, 2-9393.

## **TMDL PROGRAM - REVIEW - ALTS**

Staff (Hudda, Stebbins, Snyder, Petter) met to discuss Florida DO criteria, specifically what to do about TMDLs submitted using the old criteria and what changes need to be made to be valid under the new criteria.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Staff (Hudda, Snyder) are having a call with Florida on 11/9/17 to discuss this issue in regards to another TMDL. Discussion and conclusions from that meeting will inform how we proceed on Curlew Creek and McKay TMDL review. M. Stebbins, 2-9393.

## **WQS - EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE TRIBE WQS DEVELOPMENT WORKGROUP**

EPA WQSS staff (Mayo, Zimmerman) plan to have an informal meeting with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (Bolt) to discuss the status of the recently developed water quality standards, the FWS consultation status (initiation, informal consultation/coordination), EPA's biological evaluation status, and various next steps and expectations.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Continue coordination in order to update the EPA's biological evaluation as needed until the Eastern Band of Cherokee WQS rules are finalized. L. Mayo, 2-9247.

## **WQS PROGRAM – NUTRIENT CRITERIA – FL - WQSS**

Florida has submitted and EPA has prepared for routing the approval of six Hierarchy 1/TMDL documents that include site-specific interpretations of their narrative nutrient criterion for 8 waterbodies in Florida. These include Lake Roberts, Lake Weir, Marshall Lake, Lake Lochloosa and Cross Creek, Wacissa River and Springs, and Lake Denham.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Three of the six documents have been signed. Marshall Lake, Lake Roberts, and Lake Lochloosa and Cross Creek are still routed and awaiting signature. K. Snyder, 2-9840.

## **WQS PROGRAM - STANDARDS-CRITERIA REVIEW (NON NUTRIENT) - WQSS**

On October 30, 2017, EPA R4 WQSS, HQ OST and HQ legal staff held a call to discuss EPA's response to Mr. Ludders petition dated February 3, 2017 representing eight environmental groups requesting that the EPA Administrator make a determination that revised aquatic life and human health criteria are necessary for the State of Alabama. The response now incorporates revisions suggested by Headquarters and the Region. Headquarters still expressed concern that this may not get attention at high management to move it forward, but they will make their best effort.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Revisions to the petition response continue to be made to the SharePoint file available to authorized regional and HQ staff. L. Mayo, 2-9247.

## **WQS PROGRAM - STANDARDS-CRITERIA REVIEW (NON NUTRIENT) - WQSS**

Florida human health criteria-On October 18th, the 3rd District Court of Appeal for Florida ruled in favor of the City of Miami and the Seminole Indian Tribe of Florida. The opinion remands the case back to the Administrative Law Judge for a hearing on the merits. However, stakeholders continue to express concern to EPA with aspects of the package. Therefore, the EPA continues to provide updates to stakeholders and awaits submittal of the Florida HHC upon completion of all legal challenges within the State.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Region 4 awaits submittal of the Florida HHC upon completion of all legal challenges within the State. J. Hansel, 2-9274.

## ***NPDES Permitting and Enforcement Branch***

### **CONVENTIONAL INSPECTIONS - FL - MIES**

Conducted four Compliance Evaluation Inspections at Chemour mineral mining facilities in north Florida. Two of the inspection were led by EPS's contractor ERG and two were led by EPA inspectors. The inspection teams also included Florida DEP inspectors from both their District and HQ's offices.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Complete ICIS forms, write inspection reports, make compliance determinations, and decide the next steps. A. Dromgoole, 2-9212.

### **CWA ENFORCEMENT - SRES - GENERIC**

The NPDES tribal enforcement coordinator presented NPDES compliance assistance tools to those tribes that attended the Regional Tribal Operation Council meeting here in Atlanta. Other members of NPEB presented on the NPDES permitting process and on-site wastewater treatment system.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Continue to foster a solid relationship and provide technical/compliance assistance to the 6 federally recognized tribes in R4 over which EPA has Direct Implementation responsibilities. B. Garnett, 2-8083.

### **NATIONAL ENFORCEMENT INITIATIVES IMPLEMENTATION**

By request of Headquarters, staff presented at a National NEI meeting highlighting the Region's FY17 activities, details of facilities inspected, and a description of the findings pertaining to inspection conducted in the chemical production sector.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Continue to implement the NEI. L. Jones, 2-9201.

## **INDUSTRIAL WASTEWATER - NPDES PERMITS**

MSDEQ requested support in determining permit criteria for a Food Processor discharging high O&G pollutants into the City of Jackson, MS POTW collection system. Information was transmitted with regards to Centralized Waste Treatment (CWT)@ 40 CFR 437. However, because this is food waste, these Effluent Guidelines may not apply. Further information from the National Pretreatment Program handbook was forwarded to assist, e.g., application of Sewer Use Ordinances, Rules and Regulations applied to non-SIUs by City can be applied without the need for a permit and may be better grounding for enforcement actions.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Will follow up with additional information as needed. P. Myers, 2-9421.

## **NPDES - INDUSTRIAL - PERMITS**

Staff reviewed draft NPDES permit NC0027065 ADM Southport WWTP. The facility discharges 3.5 MGD of effluent to the Cape Fear River which is impaired for copper. There is no TMDL developed for copper. Staff noticed that zero background concentrations were used in the calculation of the reasonable potential (RP) and the permit did not contain a limit for copper. Staff consulted with North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality to recalculate the RP with background concentration of 3.0 ug/l and copper limits were added to the permit.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Staff will look for revised draft permit. E-Jones (2-9264)

## **NPDES PERMITS - MINING SECTOR - NPDES**

Staff consulted with Georgia Environmental Protection Division on a pre-draft NPDES permit for GA0050259 Royal Vindicator Mine, a gold placer mine and cyanide vat leaching gold extraction facility. This is the first gold mine permit for Georgia and EPA staff drew information from other gold mining permits in the region to make suggestions for improved permit quality including hazardous waste removal procedures, special conditions analysis for the commencement of mining, and covered activities for the discharge limits. The draft permit will be public noticed on November 15, 2017.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Staff will look for changed and review draft permit starting November 15 2017. (E-Jones 2-9264)

## **NPDES PROGRAM - MEETING - NPDES**

On October 27, 2017, the quarterly compliance call was held with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The call was held to discuss the facilities on the third quarter noncompliance report and obtain additional information on cases where an enforcement action has not been completed.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

The FDEP stated that additional updates will be provided for the facilities with enforcement actions in progress. The information will be reviewed to make sure the actions are timely and appropriate. If the timely and appropriate criteria is not met, a follow up call will be held at a later date. A. Johnson, 2-9761

**STORMWATER ENFORCEMENT CASE - GA - SRES**

#EC EPA held a show cause meeting with the City of Roswell, Georgia on Thursday, October 26th, for MS4 violations discovered in a December 2016 MS4 inspection. The City of Roswell participated by phone and provided EPA with documentation of addressing each noted violation by June 2018.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

EPA is reviewing Roswell's response and documentation to determine the appropriate next steps for enforcement. B. Garnett, 2-8083.

## ***Grants and Drinking Water Protection Branch***

**CROSS-PROGRAM CLIMATE READY WATER UTILITIES**

GIS staff is working with Mitch Gilbert and Jeremy Fisher of the Florida Utility Solutions to schedule an introductory call with several water and wastewater utility systems in southwest Florida that have expressed an interest in partnering with the EPA Headquarters Creating Resilient Water Utilities (CRWU) Team to conduct community exercises using the Climate Resilience Evaluation and Awareness Tool (CREAT).

One of the goals of the CRWU Team is to introduce EPAs CREAT, a risk assessment tool for evaluating utility resilience to weather and extreme event scenarios, to interested communities in southwest Florida.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

A conference call with several interested water and wastewater utilities in southwest Florida (affiliated with the Florida Utility Solutions) is scheduled for November 3rd.

GIS Staff and the CRWU Team will provide direct technical assistance in using CREAT to communities that are planning for new investments in water infrastructure; and will facilitate discussions on how to utilize CREAT for assessing current and future infrastructure development plans. C. Ejimofor, 2-9309.

**NON-POINT SOURCE/319 PROGRAM & GRANTS**

Staff participated in the 319/NEPs Sections during a Branch meeting on October 23rd to discuss the data competency requirement for pre and post certification. Currently, the 319 TOs nor the States are certifying data competency for generation or collection of environmental data for federal awards >\$200,000. Discussions also included whether TOs or States will pre and post certify data competency based on an approved QMP, QAPP, SOPs, past performance, and other documents as appropriate. Staff provided a sample state pre and post certification letter, if this option is pursued. Subaward requirements were

discussed regarding risk assessments on sub-recipients, per MS DEQ. Sub-recipients are required to submit reports to grantees and grantees are required to report on sub-awards within progress and final reports. Discussed the R&Rs for the 319 program with respect to POs, TOs, and the PPG PO. Staff contacted the QA/QC coordinator to inquire about States pre and post certifying data competency for all water grants where data competency applies. Staff finalized the 319 Grants Fact Sheet to share internally and externally with topics ranging from PPGs, Subawards, Data Competency, Conferences, reporting, and close out procedures. The fact sheet contains hyperlinks to EPA's policies, orders, and guidance for these topics. TOs should share the fact sheet with their 319 counterparts.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Follow-up: staff has inquired with the Air division on data competency certification. Pending meeting with QA/QC Coordinator on data competency and State certifications. J. Shadle, 2-9436.

**PWSS - AREA-WIDE OPTIMIZATION - DWS**

The Region 4 AWOP Team met on October 31, 2017 to develop a new strategy for program implementation in light of impending cuts to HQ contractor support. The team also discussed the upcoming R4 Multi-State meeting scheduled for November 7 - 9, 2017 in KY.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

The Region 4 AWOP Team will continue to work with the EPA Technical Support Center to determine how best to provide the necessary optimization tools and technical assistance to states to support the program. J. Morris, 2-9480.

**PWSS - STATE PRIMACY - DWS**

Drinking Water Section (DWS) staff completed a review of Alabama's response to Region 4 comments on the State's PWSS Program primacy revision application for the Revised Total Coliform Rule. ADEM needs to follow up on two minor issues before DWS is in position to seek concurrence from the Office of Regional Counsel on a recommendation to the Regional Administrator that the application be approved.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

DWS comments transmitted to ADEM October 25, 2017. Once the State responds, DWS will conduct further review. D. Froneberger, 2-9446.

**UIC PROGRAM - COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT - GWUICS**

Following the compliance targeting analysis in the Summer of 2017 on the universe of Kentucky Class V wells in the UIC database system, the staff conducted Class V well inspections at one of the resultant facilities that had expired Class V well permits and was located near a wellhead protection area. During week of October 16, 2017, the staff conducted Class V well inspections at a Revelation Energy facility in Cumberland Kentucky. During the inspection, staff verified that the Revelation Energy facility had nine Class V wells which two of the wells are active on site under one expired permit. Staff identified potential mechanical integrity test, monitoring and reporting violations.



**NEXT STEP(S):**

Staff will continue to collect information from Revelation Energy management to make compliance determination on the subject permit, and will propose appropriate options for addressing any violations. A. Shelton, 2-9636.

**UIC PROGRAM - PERMITTING - GWUICS**

# of Financial Responsibility Assignment Letters (KDOG) routed to the Water Protection Division Director for signature: 2  
Total FR Assigned: \$60,000

# of FR Release Letters routed to the Water Protection Division Director for signature: 1  
Total FR Released: \$3,000

# of FR Approved and Entered in the UIC Database: 1  
Total FR Approved: \$4,800

**NEXT STEP(S): N/A**

M. Lester, 2-9292.

**PWSS - UNREGULATED CONTAMINANT OCCURRENCE/MONITORING - DWS**

NCDEQ signed and submitted a voluntary UCMR4 Partnership Agreement to Region 4 on October 24, 2017, agreeing to support EPA with implementing the fourth cycle of unregulated contaminant monitoring. This is the first cycle for which NCDEQ has signed a PA. Prior to submittal, DWS staff responded to NCDEQ questions regarding PA format, submittal, the kinds of assistance requested of states and participation by North Carolina PWSs in previous UCMR cycles. NCDEQ agreed to assist EPA in ensuring PWS compliance by following up with PWSs regarding completion of their monitoring requirements. NCDEQ will also try to assist EPA with obtaining system inventory and sample point information for loading into SDWARS. A copy of the PA was forwarded to the UCMR4 Team Leader at EPA's Technical Support Center. UCMR4 monitoring begins in 2018.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

No further action needed at this time. Region 4 will work with NCDEQ once UCMR4 monitoring begins to facilitate NC PWS compliance with monitoring requirements. A. Humphris, 2-9305.

**PWSS - AIRCRAFT DRINKING WATER RULE - DWS**

The Region 4 Aircraft Drinking Water Rule (ADWR) Team participated in the Water Quality Event Tabletop dry-run on October 26, 2017. The team went through the exercise to provide final comments, resolve any remaining issues and finalize the materials in preparation for the pilot on November 15, 2017.

The Region 4 ADWR Team Leader facilitated the monthly meeting on October 26, 2017.

The major topics of discussion were deliverables for the Water Quality Event Tabletop Exercise, status of the Delta Air Lines, Inc. audit report, Orange Air, LLC's operational status, follow up on CBI implications, status of the enforcement determinations and next steps.

The Region 4 ADWR Team Leader sent confirmation emails on October 30, 2017 with date, time, location, hotel, building entry requirements and travel directions to all participants for the Water Quality Event Tabletop Exercise to be held on November 15, 2017 in the Region 4 office.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

The ADWR team will finalize all logistical requirements for the meeting to include sending confirmation email messages to the participants, video conference, audio, and room set up.

The next areas of focus will include providing the tabletop exercise, completing the Delta audit report, and issuing NOV's as necessary.

The Region 4 ADWR Team Leader will respond to any inquiries from the meeting participants to ensure a successful outcome from the exercise.

J. Morris, 2-9480.

**SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT PROJECTS (SAAP) PROGRAM – GRANT AWARD – GIS**

GIS Staff drafted and submitted, for approval to the GIS Chief, a funding recommendation for a Special Appropriation Act Project grant to McDowell County, NC for the installation of approximately 11,250 linear feet of 12-inch water lines to provide drinking water to an area of the County not currently served by public water.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Once approved by the GIS Chief, GIS Staff will forward the funding recommendation to the WPD Director for approval and then to the Grants Specialist for processing of the grant award. C. Ejimofor, 2-9309.

**SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT PROJECTS (SAAP) PROGRAM – GRANT TECHNICAL SUPPORT – GIS**

On October 31st, GIS Staff reviewed and approved the procurement of contractors selected by the City of Sulligent SAAP Grantee for the construction of their water storage tank and water well project.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

GIS Staff will continue to provide technical assistance to the City as they award the construction contract for their proposed project to the lowest bidder. C. Ejimofor, 2-9309.

## **STATE REVOLVING FUND (SRF) PROGRAM - COMMUNICATION**

(Activity) Staff began analyzing prior year documents for the North Carolina annual review. Documents reviewed included the prior year Program Evaluation Report (PER), annual review checklist, and the annual report. The annual review of North Carolina will take place in late November of 2017.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

T. Creighton, 2-8344.

## **STATE REVOLVING FUND (SRF) PROGRAM - COMMUNICATION**

(Activity) Staff participated in the Water Infrastructure and Resiliency Finance Center (WIRFC) Regional Coordinators bi-monthly call. The conference call included updates on the latest WIRFC efforts including their recent release of a report, Water Infrastructure Financial Leadership. This document highlights successful financial tools to help inform local water infrastructure investment decisions. This document can be shared with our state partners to assist them in their decision-making processes.

### **NEXT STEP(S): N/a**

T. Creighton, 2-8344.

## **STATE REVOLVING FUND (SRF) PROGRAM - MEASURES**

Staff is researching direct loan funding growth measures. Staff joined the financial indicators workgroup and was tasked with comment and feedback period on GAO audit findings. The workgroup needs to collaborate and determine the best fit variables for future measures and statistics. SRF NIMS data will add 2 new financial indicators to measure growth performance over time.

### **NEXT STEP(S): N/A**

S. Hammett, 2-9754.

## **STATE REVOLVING FUND (SRF) PROGRAM - PROGRAM ASSISTANCE**

Working with SC DHEC engineer and waterworks engineer to retrieve AIS certification documentation/proof of approvals on values in question of non-compliance. FOIA request was due 10-27-17, extension granted until 11-10-17. Follow up communication and requested documentation will be provided to EPA FOIA coordinator when received, no later than 11-10-17. Contact with SC and FOIA coordinator allowed extension to be granted due to project start time and lag time in missing file information. This project is new and just started, therefore the file contents is not with the state programs yet. Work in progress at this time.

### **NEXT STEP(S):N/A**

S. Hammett, 2-9754.

## **UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATIONS, REGION 4, GA**

FY16 funding in the amount of \$228,000, project date: 10-1-16 thru 9-30-18, awarded to assist the State of Georgia with implementing the Clean Water Act Section 604 Water Quality Management Program is currently borderline for possible funding being swept under EPAs Unliquidated Policy. Under the policy grants with no drawdown activity for 180> can be liquidated. The grant although performing as agreed has had a lack of drawdown activity since May 25, 2017. Project: The project supports contractual work being conducted/performed is related to Resource Assessment: Watershed, Lake and/or Estuary Modeling to assist in statewide water quality management planning in support of regional planning and nutrient standards development. Lead Organization: Georgia Environmental Protection Division. This work is in direct support of statewide water management planning and nutrient standards development. The grantee has been advised and requested to submit a drawdown to eliminate this risk. Outcome: Workplan activities continue as approved supporting the Water Quality Management Program. POC K. Gardner.

### **NEXT STEP(S): N/A**

K. Gardner, 2-9312.

## ***Ocean, Wetlands and Stream Protection Branch***

### **MARINE POLLUTION PROGRAMS - ODMDS MOBILE - MRWES**

Conducting a trends assessment survey at the Mobile Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Site, located offshore Dauphin Island, AL, from October 26 to November 1. Staff from WPD, SEDS and Region 3's Ocean Dumping Program will be aboard the Research Vessel (R/V) Pelican to conduct the monitoring study of the site. Samples collected will include sediment for chemical analysis, and benthic organisms, as well as microplastics for a water column study by the Gulf Program Office. Data from the study will inform development of the Site Management and Monitoring Plan for the expanded new site as well as support conclusions made in the Environment Assessment and Rulemaking to modify the sites designation.

### **NEXT STEP(S): N/A**

R. Calli, 2-9846.

### **NRDA TRUSTEE IMPLEMENTATION WORKGROUP – AL – MRWES**

The Alabama Trustee Implementation Group (AL-TIG) small group has been meeting via telephone twice a week since early February to discuss restoration planning. The AL-TIG small group requested project ideas for Restoration Plan II from the public and received approximately 600 proposals. Currently, the focus of the planning goals for restoration Plan II are 1) wetlands, coastal, and nearshore habitats, 2) habitat projects on federally managed lands, 3) nutrient reduction, 4) sea turtles, 5) marine mammals, 6) birds, and 7) oysters. The AL-TIG small group developed screening criteria for each of the restoration types and applied the criteria to each of the project submittals. Currently there are 24 projects that will be further developed for OPA and NEPA analysis. The AL-TIG small group will continue to evaluate and seek input on the project proposals and expects to have a final recommendation for the full AL-TIG in January 2018.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

The next AL-TIG call is scheduled for November 2, 2017. The small group will continue to meet weekly to discuss Restoration Plan II and has a scheduled in-person meeting on November 29, 2017 in Mobile, Alabama. C. Parker, 2-9838.

**WETLANDS ENFORCEMENT - MEETING - MRWES**

MRWES staff will meet with Mobile District Staff in Birmingham, AL to discuss EPA section 404 enforcement, CWA jurisdiction, CWA 404(f) exemptions, minor drainage and EPA/Corps interactions in the enforcement process.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Continue to refine our interactions with the Corps to improve our CWA enforcement process and results. M. Wylie, 2-9409.

**WETLANDS ENFORCEMENT CASES - FL - MRWES**

Consolidated Tomoka Tract B (North and South Parcels: MRWES staff conducted an inspection of the wetland restoration and creation areas on the approximate 1600-acre South Parcel. Restoration and creation activities have been completed on the South Parcel and the North Tract restoration activities have not been completed but are ongoing.

Walton Plantation: The Walton Plantation Home Owners Association (HOA) recently acquired the parcel on which the violation occurred. The HOA president has agreed to settle for the unauthorized impacts to waters of the United States. MRWES staff is preparing an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) that will require long term protection of the parcel and an after-the-fact permit application for fill to remain in waters of the United States.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Consolidated Tomoka Tract B (North and South Parcels: MRWES staff drafted a letter to Consolidated Tomoka Land Company (Respondent) summarizing the site inspection. MRWES staff expects to route for Section Chief signature on or about November 2, 2017. The Respondent will continue restoration activities and monitoring as required in the Administrative Order on Consent. MRWES staff will monitor to ensure compliance with the Administrative Order on Consent.

Walton Plantation: MRWES will prepare and route the AOC for Respondents signature on or about November 2, 2017. C. Parker, 2-9838.

**WETLANDS ENFORCEMENT CASES - SC - MRWES**

Second round of penalty negotiation with Robert Glover representatives. Glover impacted five acres of wetlands in the floodplain of the Coosawhatchie River in Jasper County, SC. Glover representatives far from EPA's penalty bottom line.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Glover representatives will brief Mr. Glover after today's negotiations and schedule round three penalty negotiation. M. Wylie, 2-9409.

**WETLANDS PROGRAM - ACT WATER CONTROL MANUAL - WSRS**

Staff (Calli) attended part of the Appalachia-Chattahoochee-Flint Stakeholders (ACF Stakeholders) meeting in Phenix City, AL. The Stakeholders were presented with the findings of a review by the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution, including an assessment of achievements and challenges, and recommendations for the future of the Stakeholders group. The assessment recognized the value of consensus-based decision-making, in-person facilitated meetings, positive relationship-building, and the development of the Sustainable Water Management Plan. The assessment also highlighted the challenges inherent in operating with a large Governing Board, the difficult and time-consuming nature of consensus-based decision-making, the frustration experienced associated with limited ability to directly influence science/policy and implement outcomes, the ACF Stakeholders desire for increased engagement from federal and state agencies, and the limitations that litigation put on communications and data sharing. Overarching recommendations for the future of the ACF Stakeholders included consideration of reducing the Governing Board size, freshening membership, but overall to re-energize the group and invest in long-term stability due to the importance of their work.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

none R. Calli, 2-9846.

**WETLANDS PROGRAM - COMMUNICATION (NOT RELATED TO SPECIFIC PROJECTS) - WSRS**

WSRS staff have formally begun collaboration with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District (at the District's request) on modifications to its 2017 Draft Standard Operating Procedure for Compensatory Mitigation. In July 2017, the Savannah District released a proposed revision to its 2004 compensatory mitigation guidelines for Georgia, and subsequently asked for EPA Region 4 to participate in stakeholder outreach, assess stakeholder comments and help finalize the revised guidelines.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

The Savannah District is hoping to have interim revised guidelines available for beta testing in Georgia by January 2018. The Savannah District has also asked EPA Region 4 to help explore opportunities to work collaboratively with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District on a more comprehensive revision to the mitigation guidelines in both Districts simultaneously, due to the similarity of landscapes and aquatic resources in both South Carolina and Georgia. E. Somerville, 706-355-8514.

## **WETLANDS PROGRAM - COMMUNICATION (NOT RELATED TO SPECIFIC PROJECTS) - WSRS**

WSRS staff reviewed and provided comment on draft user manuals for the Tennessee Stream Quantification Tool (SQT), which is a new method to assess and document the success of stream mitigation projects in Tennessee. The method will be used by both the State of Tennessee in its Aquatic Resources Alteration Permit program and the Nashville District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as part of the Clean Water Act, Section 404 program. The State's regionalization effort of the SQT has been funded largely by EPA Wetland Program Development Grants.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

Beta versions of the TN SQT will be tested by the State of Tennessee, University of Tennessee and a workgroup comprised of private practitioners beginning in November 2017. The State of Tennessee anticipates releasing all applicable documentation for a 30-day public comment period sometime in late December 2017. E. Somerville, 706-355-8514.

## **WETLANDS PROGRAM - GENERAL**

Wetlands and Stream Regulatory Section staff continued conversations the Office of Oceans Wetlands and Watersheds (OWOW) to tailor a class for Region 4 Wetlands and NEPA staff on improving EPA input to the US Army Corps of Engineers on CWA 404 permit applications and NEPA actions. To prepare for the class OWOW staff will interview representatives from the nine Corps Districts in R4. Case studies from finalized Corps 404 permits in R4 will be used to convey possible improvements in EPA and Corps coordination.

Example questions that will be asked of the Corps are: 1) What does the District see as EPAs role in the application review process? 2) In the Districts opinion, what is EPAs special expertise (per the Corps regulations)? 3) Does EPA have any expertise that is/would be useful to the Corps (WQS, modeling, cumulative impacts, delineation, relationship with the States, etc.

### **NEXT STEP(S):**

The class will be taught in Atlanta on January 30 and 31, 2018. J. Fowler, 2-9758.

## **WETLANDS PROGRAM - MITIGATION BANKING - NC - WSRS**

Region 4 WSRS Staff participated in the initial committee planning meeting for the EcoStream 2018 Conference; a biannual conference uniting academia, restoration professionals, biologists, engineers, and regulatory agencies. This was the first in a series of planning meetings to coordinate efforts towards next year's conference in Asheville, North Carolina in August 2018. Discussion involved themes for the conference, awards, keynote speakers (potentially to include EPA HQ staff), topics for sessions and abstracts, site visits, and specialty workshops.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Continue to attend planning meetings as a committee member as they are scheduled. T. Bowers, 2-9225.

**WETLANDS PROGRAM - MITIGATION BANKING - NC - WSRS**

Region 4 staff provided feedback and comments on the Lochill Farm Mitigation Site (the Site or Project) Final Draft Mitigation Plan as an addition to the North Carolina Division of Mitigation Services (NCDMS) In-Lieu Fee Program. Michael Baker Engineering, Inc. has presented a viable plan to provide compensatory mitigation for stream impacts associated with the US Army Corps of Engineers Clean Water Act Section 404 permit program. The site is expected to provide 4,113 Stream Mitigation Units or credits through a combination of stream restoration, enhancement and preservation of several Unnamed Tributaries within the Upper Neuse River watershed (HUC 03020201). The Lochill Farm site will also provide an excellent opportunity for the restoration, enhancement and preservation of headwater forest and Piedmont alluvial forest within the riparian floodplains of the project streams within the project conservation easements. As such the project will generate up to 176,511 buffer mitigation units and the site will be protected by a 15.8-acre permanent conservation easement. No wetlands or nutrient offsets are presented specifically for additional compensatory mitigation credit.

**NEXT STEP(S):**

Review upcoming NCDMS Mitigation Site Plans for the Edwards-Johnson site in Johnston County, the Pen Dell site in Johnston County, the Lone Hickory site in Yadkin County, Alliance Headwaters site in Johnston County and the John Deere site in Rutherford County. T. Bowers, 2-9225.